

# Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin



Volume 47

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# Bulletin of the Saddleworth Historical Society

**Volume 47**

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*Saddleworth Historical Society Archive*



## SECRETARY'S ADDRESS TO THE AGM 2017

**David J. W. Harrison**

Your committee has experienced a somewhat difficult time during the last year. Shortly after members were elected at the 2016 AGM regrettably some chose to resign from the committee thus leaving us with a dearth of active membership to face a busy year. Those resigning were Robert Scott, Neil Barrow our chairman and treasurer, followed by Kate Jelen and at a later date, Ivan Foster. Your committee set out to recruit replacements for this shortfall and was initially partly successful though later some of the new recruits subsequently fell by the wayside too. Co-opted to the committee in their stead were Susan Prendergast and Tony Wheeldon with a third person considering the role of the office of treasurer which sadly was eventually not taken up. None the less those happy few remaining persevered to bring forward a programme of lectures and publications as intended and in this we feel that we have been particularly successful.

At this point I must thank, most sincerely, Neil for continuing to process the accounts, he too being the only signatory for our bank accounts lately on the committee. Also plaudits must be offered to Ivan who has continued to monitor the Society's website and advise on the activity noted thereon. It should be noted, of course, that membership of the committee is not a prerequisite for undertaking tasks for the Society as any member may take up tasks and, if they so wish, report on their interests at committee meetings. Indeed your committee is most grateful for Mike Buckley's input as minutes secretary, acting membership secretary and Bulletin editor attending to all the needs concerning publications in general and reporting on these activities as appropriate. Another non committee member is Duncan Anderson who has adopted the role of gate keeper with aplomb and who is, bit by bit, learning who are members and have free entry to lectures, and who isn't and should pay. Perhaps you've met him!

Those committee members remaining at the year's end are most heartily thanked for their sterling efforts through the year and all are prized for the work they have done.

Victor Khadem for arranging the splendid run of lecturers to speak at our open meetings and Charles Baumann for advertising and organising the venues for those talks. Because of them we have recorded some quite remarkably figures for attendances including one of approximately 140 people at the Greenfield village talk. Please accept my commiserations those at the back who had difficulty hearing Mike Fox on that occasion. Charles too has been a stalwart with his willingness to chair our public meetings whilst I can concentrate on attending to the technical aspect of the presentations. Meg Langton who, despite her hospitalisation for a period, did not miss a beat and organised the refreshments on many occasions, particularly that for the South Pennine Day School and book launch. She too hosted all our committee meetings throughout the year, assisted with the sales of the South Pennine History book, sales of our own publications at open meetings and numerous other tasks so essential to the smooth running of the organisation. Christine Barrow ably assisted with the provision of refreshments too as did Tony Wheeldon, our heavy lift man he still being fit, and therefore able to transfer the Society's artefacts from place to place as needed. Lesley Brown continues to be very supportive, again being one who can and willingly does turn her hand to any task not covered by others. Livi Michael helpfully embraced book sales and work in the Society's archive as her contribution.

## SECRETARY'S ADDRESS

After last year's AGM our programme of talks continued in November with the Diggle village talk, **From Diglea to Diggle: The Growth of a Village** by our chairman Neil Barrow. I was unable to attend this talk at the time but was assured that it was received most enthusiastically by an appreciative audience. Another I missed was the December presentation by Mike Fox, **By Reason of the Darkness...: Street Lamps and Lighting in Saddleworth 1850 to 1930**. Again, I am advised, unmissable. See his follow up article in Bulletin Volume 47 number 2. January followed with Dr Livi Michael's presentation entitled **Accession: From Tewksbury to Bosworth** followed in March by Dr Sarah Rose with **Power Privilege and Politics in the Medieval Honour of Pontefract** a learned paper about the families that controlled Saddleworth from their seat in Pontefract Castle in medieval England. In April we were regaled by Lord David Clark of Windermere with his presentation **Victor Grayson; The Man and the Mystery**. The fascinating story of this enigmatic Suffragette supporting Independent Labour MP through to his sudden disappearance in 1920. May saw Dr Patrick Eyres speak to us on **Yorkshire Capabilities as Portrayed by Georgian Artists**. This proved to be a thoroughly fascinating dissertation on the treatment by various artists of the views of the landscape and great houses of Yorkshire by such as Turner, Barret, Nicholson, Bardwell and others not forgetting Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. June was the date for our annual series of village talks, this time given by Mike Fox in and entitled **Greenfield: The Making of a Saddleworth Village**. We were most pleased to see the large turnout of about 140 to 150 people, as mentioned earlier, who expressed their delight at Michael's illustrated portrayal of the growth of and anecdotal reminiscences of Greenfield. In July we received David Glover who gave the first of our three lectures celebrating 500 years since the onset of the Reformation, **Halifax Reformation Stories and the 1611 Bible**. After assessing the impact the Reformation had on Lancashire and Yorkshire he discussed Halifax's links with two of the King James's Bible's translators, Sir Henry Savile and John Bois. Our most recent talk, the second on the Reformation, featured **Dr John Dee and Elizabethan Lancashire**. An illustrated talk by Professor Stephen Bowd of Edinburgh University about this Warden of the College of Manchester, an alchemist, scientist, magician, antiquary, mathematician and spy. He was an archetypal learned Renaissance Man who ended up reviled by his contemporaries in not only Manchester but beyond too.

The lecture programme continues after the AGM tonight when Victor Khadem will give his latest offering **Saddleworth Chapel: From Foundation to Reformation** concluding our series of Reformation themed talks. This is obviously a most appropriate opportunity to yet again thank Victor Khadem for the work he has done in putting together what has been a first class series of lectures this year.

Earlier I mentioned the South Pennine Day School. This was an event hosted by your Society on behalf of the South Pennine History Group at which a number of contributors to the new book, History in the South Pennines were pleased to give short presentations on subjects of their choosing, all based on their essays in the book. The whole was in memory of the late, much lamented Alan Petford and was part of the campaign to raise funds to form a legacy in Alan's name. The event was very well received and attracted 52 guests excluding the speakers and our own staff on the day.

The speakers at the event giving freely of their time were Ian Bailey, Victor Khadem, David Smalley, Nigel Smith, Mike Buckley and David Cant to whom I would extend grateful thanks on behalf of the Society for making the day such a success.

## SECRETARY'S ADDRESS

Many thanks also must be made to members working behind the scenes to ensure all ran smoothly, Meg Langton ably assisted by Patricia Harrison both of whom spent most of the time in the kitchen busily attending to the delegates' sustenance and the redoubtable Duncan Anderson on the door checking in those delegates.

On conclusion of the day the South Pennine book was launched and to date, though little local promotion has been attempted yet outside the Society, sales have been good and many plaudits have been received on its content.

Your Society is in the process of composing yet more books for future sale and expects to produce one at least ready for Christmas in partnership with the Saddleworth Local History Work Group headed by Michael Fox with the working title 'The Pownall Book' describing the early days of the modern Uppermill High Street. Several others are underway. Further to the decision to publish a parallel series of Monumental Inscriptions in Saddleworth churchyards the second of these recording the inscriptions in St Thomas's (Heights) old churchyard and the Delph Chapel Garden should be available early next year. Another will be an updated reprint of The Process of Enclosures in Saddleworth by Alan Petford.

Production of the Bulletin has taken place fairly smoothly this year in line with our new editorial policies and its control by an editorial sub-committee. Mike Buckley is editor, ably supported by Victor Khadem and Neil Barrow. I deal mainly with the layout and design and trust that the result pleases all who receive it. We are also introducing colour illustrations as often as production costs allow. The aim is to produce a balance of articles with something of interest for everyone. All contributions are welcome and if you have material or the results of a piece of research that you think would be of worth publishing please contact Mike Buckley.

Meg Langton writes and collates information and I compile the Newsletter which goes out by email, or with the Bulletin to those who don't have Internet access. Email distribution is the preferred route as postage costs are now ever more prohibitive and ideally demand that the Bulletin and Newsletter be sent out together. But as publication dates for the Bulletin are fluid and distribution depends on local hand delivery, news is sometimes a little out of date when it is received in this way. With email we can make sure the news is always timely and can notify members of any last minute events, news or changes of plan.

Mike Buckley has taken over as the job of membership secretary on a temporary basis and we are looking for a new permanent membership secretary. If members would pay their annual subscriptions on time without multiple reminders, or better still by standing order, this job would be relatively straight forward. When Bulletins are published it is not easy including personalised reminders in the addressing and dispatching process, all of which is done manually by members of the committee. I would particularly like to thank Mike for stepping in and taking on this important role and once again would like to thank the volunteers who hand deliver the Bulletins locally saving the Society hundreds of pounds in postal costs.

The Society's website is unfortunately still in a transient situation. We have determined on an ambitious list of content and services and have been working with a local website design company on its implementation. Ivan Foster was leading this project which up to recently was progressing satisfactorily. However some problems have arisen lately which have resulted in its temporary closure. We hope to resolve this unfortunate situation shortly.

## SECRETARY'S ADDRESS

We have lost old friends of the Society this year:

Lorna Gartside is one such who was a keen member and who was able to offer a fund of local knowledge, particularly regarding the settlement of Hollingreave and its infrastructure.

Harold Rhodes Brown of Abbotsford, British Columbia, was another.

Both are missed and we send our condolences to their families.

I would conclude with a big thank you to all who have helped with running the Society this last year and trust that not only will they be as willing as before to assist with promoting the Society to Saddleworth in particular but ask that you, our many members, look to yourselves to bring forward ideas and physical presence to the committee. Please look at us on the committee, many being ancients as we are and ready for the history books ourselves, and do please consider coming forward to keep the Society alive and well. Don't let it fold!

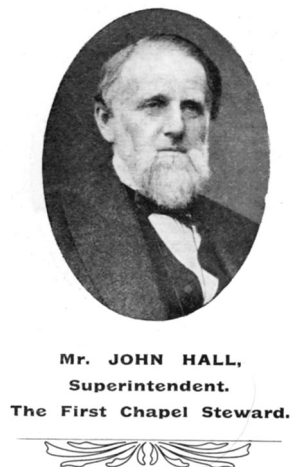
*David JW Harrison*

*8th October 2017*



John moved out of Saddleworth and between 1855 and 1859 his electoral register address was No. 4, Milbourne Place, Rushholme, Manchester, his qualifying property being a freehold house and land in Uppermill.<sup>71</sup> By 1860 the list of shareholders in Saddleworth Banking Company of Dobcross included John Hall of Court, merchant and Hannah Shaw Hall of Court, gentlewoman.<sup>72</sup> In 1861 John Sherbrooke, Gentleman, had returned to Diggle and turned his attention to cotton spinning having bought Court Mill, Harrop Court.<sup>73</sup> The family lived at Court; Alice aged 15 was still listed as a scholar with a governess, Elizabeth Allen from Thrapston, Northamptonshire who was only 18 herself! The household was completed by their maid aged 20. It was also 1861 when he joined the Freemasons Candour Lodge in Uppermill.<sup>74</sup> His address remained Court until c.1878. During that time Lodge Bank, Figure 10, was built attached to the three storey loom house where he probably lived at first. Lodge Bank is first mentioned by name in 1881. Behind the row of buildings was the coach house, much altered today.

In 1871 John Sherbrooke was recorded as a retired cotton spinner aged 52. In the electoral register for 1877 he is still at Court with a freehold house and land in Uppermill, however in 1878 he is briefly resident in Uppermill before his move to 22 Kent Road, Birkdale, Southport in 1879, near his daughter Alice and her family. By 1883 his estate in Uppermill had increased to several freehold houses and land as well as freehold chief rents.<sup>75</sup> John Sherbrooke Hall died in 1884 leaving £5,165 0s 6d, equivalent today to £494,000. His wife Hannah died in 1890 leaving £5,805 6s 6d, equivalent to £347,679.<sup>76</sup> John Sherbrooke was a supporter of Wrigley Mill Methodist Chapel and was thanked for his financial support in the Jubilee Souvenir Brochure 1914. A subscription of £50 was recorded in the newspaper of the day.<sup>77</sup> The brochure also included a photograph of Mr John Hall as the first Chapel Steward and Superintendent. It is reasonable to conclude that this is a photograph of John Sherbrooke Hall.<sup>78</sup>



**Figure 9 John Hall, first Steward and Superintendent, Wrigley Mill Methodist Chapel**

SHSA

<sup>71</sup> West Riding Electoral Registers, Polling Districts: no. 348, Saddleworth (1855), p.6; no. 332, Saddleworth (1860), p. 7; no. 164, Saddleworth (1877-9), pp. 456, 471, & 480.

<sup>72</sup> 'Saddleworth Banking Co., list of shareholders', *Leeds Mercury*, 18 February 1860; reprinted in *SHSB*, vol. 38, no. 4, (2008), p. 6.

<sup>73</sup> B. Barnes, 'The Early Cotton Industry in Saddleworth', *SHSB*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1979), p. 82.

<sup>74</sup> The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, United Grand Lodge of English Freemasons Membership Registers, 1751-1921, available at [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk).

<sup>75</sup> West Riding Electoral Registers, Polling District no. 164, Saddleworth (1883), p. 552.

<sup>76</sup> Greenhalgh & Haigh Family Papers (GHFP). Calculating comparative figure is fraught with difficulties. An alternative plausible figure, relative to the earnings of the average worker, would be £2,446,000. Figures have been taken from <https://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/relativevalue.php> which includes a thorough discussion of the various approaches and the problems involved.

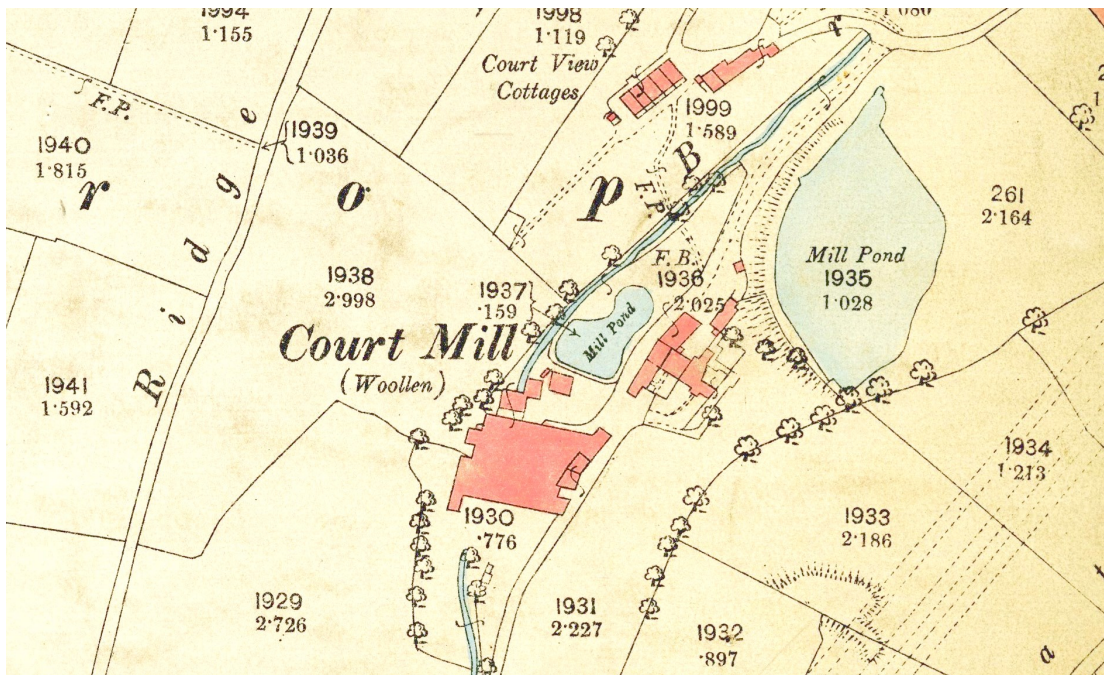
<sup>77</sup> *Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 3 October 1868.

<sup>78</sup> *Wrigley Mill Wesleyan Chapel and Sunday School Jubilee Souvenir*, (1914), pp. 7-8 SHSA, H/BB/CAB/26.



DJW Harrison

**Figure 10 Harrop Court:**  
Left to right; 3 storey farm house, weaver's loom house and Lodge Bank where stone gate posts (partially obscured) mark the entrance to the garden



OS 1892-4 map<sup>79</sup>

**Figure 11 Court Mill**  
The dwellings at Court are shown between the two mill dams (lodges) with Lodge Bank on the right with the coach house under the dam wall

<sup>79</sup> The First Edition Twenty Five inches to One Mile Ordnance Survey Map, 1892-4 in Mike Buckley, David Harrison, Victor Khadem, Alan Petford and John Widdall (eds), *Mapping Saddleworth*, (Saddleworth Historical Society, 2007), p.137.

### William Dehown Hall & Diggle Paper Mill

William Dehown Hall, the younger brother of the Partnership, John and William Hall Paper Manufacturers, was just fifteen when he lived with John Sherbrooke at Diggle Bridge in 1841. William married Mary Heginbottom at St Chad's Rochdale in 1846.<sup>80</sup> They occupied land, mill and buildings paying £50 or more in rent at Sherbrooke and Uppermill in 1847, and from 1848 to 1857 at Diggle Bridge, Diggle Paper Mill and Leaside according to the Electoral Register.<sup>81</sup> In 1851 he and Mary lived at Lee Cottage, probably, today's Lee Side, with their first three sons: James Hamilton Hall (1847-1862), Herbert William Hall (1849-1882), and John Heginbottom Hall (1850-1876).<sup>82</sup>

William Dehown's second son, Herbert William, was born at Leaside but by 1861 the family had moved to the newly-built Greenbank House. In 1881 Herbert William and his wife Ann Howard, née Stokes lived at Lodge Bank, with three children including a William Deheune (sic), a teacher and a servant; presumably having moved there when his uncle John Sherbrooke moved to Uppermill. William had joined his father's business. Herbert died at the early age of 33 on Boxing Day 1882. His will was valued at £1,275 9-3, £118,000 in today's money.<sup>83</sup> His wife Ann and daughter Beatrice were at Great Crosby, Southport, in 1891 whilst older daughter Mary was a boarder at the Moravian Ladies' Boarding School, Fairfield, Droylsden. His son William Dehown boarded at the Boys' School. By 1911 the children and Ann were together and living in New Brighton, Cheshire and William was working as a commercial traveller.<sup>84</sup>



*David JW Harrison*

**Figure 12 Greenbank House, Shaw Lee Diggle**

<sup>80</sup> St Chad's Rochdale, Registers, marriages, 25 Jun 1846, available at [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk).

<sup>81</sup> West Riding Electoral Register, Polling Districts: no. 353, Quick (1847), p. 3; no. 332, Saddleworth (1848), p. 8. no. 348. Quick (1847), p. 7.

<sup>82</sup> GHFP.

<sup>83</sup> GHFP & England & Wales National Probate Calendar 1883, available at [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk).

<sup>84</sup> Census 1901 and 1911.

### William Dehown Hall and Greenbank House

In 1858 William Dehown Hall built Greenbank House, a status house, overlooking the Diggle Paper Mill. Following William's death the correspondent in the *Oldham Chronicle* commented that 'his position of affluence may be gathered by the fact that he drove each Sunday to Ebenezer Congregational Church in a carriage and pair and each of his six sons possessed a horse'.<sup>85</sup> He certainly had status, a trustee of Ebenezer and one of the trustees of Kilngreen, the non-denominational school built at Diggle Bridge in 1785 to whom applicants for particulars of the position of school master had to apply in 1850.<sup>86</sup> Later he was churchwarden at St. Chad's from 1875 to 1880 as his father had been in 1802-3.<sup>87</sup> William Dehown Hall of Diggle Paper Maker was a shareholder of Saddleworth Banking Company.<sup>88</sup> Apart from his paper making he established a model farm at Lee Cross, see figure 15, based upon a huge central covered court yard surrounded by integral rooms for animals, food stocks and equipment.<sup>89</sup> In 1873 he is recorded as owning 37 acres and 10 perches of land.<sup>90</sup>

Mary, William's wife gave birth to five more sons: Arthur Wellesley (1852-1901), George Harry (1855-1870), Marshall Legh (1856-1911), Stanley Edward (1859-1912) and William Dehown (1861-1862). A further four births and deaths are recorded.<sup>91</sup> As befits a local gentry family, sons John Heginbottom and Arthur Wellesley Hall were boarders at Mr Howson's school at Woods House, Sugar Lane, Dobcross in 1861.<sup>92</sup> Two other sons, Marshall Legh and Stanley Edward were sent to Harrow school. William Dehown sent a letter to the two boys at Harrow dated 30 April 1874.<sup>93</sup>

Memorandum

From: W. D. Hall,  
Paper Manufacturer of Diggle

To: Marshall and Stanley  
at Harrow

DIGGLE & YEW TREE MILLS  
NEAR MANCHESTER. APRIL 30TH 1874

My Very Dear Lads,

I am glad to hear you are well and improving in your learning, don't neglect a moment - you will find the benefit and advantage after, when you become men; your Bro. John will see you in London; he leaves here on Thursday morning and will stay up to Tuesday following. Will send you some money by him, you must write home before you go to London - and let me see what improvement you have made also - mind your spelling - which is looked at much by your friends, when you correspond with them. We are all well at home, and talk about you every day and hope you may make yourselves clever good young men.

Your very affectionate father,

W. D. Hall

<sup>85</sup> *Oldham Chronicle*, 11 May 1901, Saddleworth Museum Archives, M/2/7.

<sup>86</sup> Sandra Ratcliff, 'An Outline History of Saddleworth Schools, Part 1', *SHSB*, vol. 42, no. 4 (2012), p. 105.

<sup>87</sup> John Radcliffe, (ed.), *The Parish Registers St. Chad, Saddleworth, 1751-1800*, (Privately Printed, 1891), pp. 547 & 549.

<sup>88</sup> Saddleworth Banking Co., list of shareholders, *SHSB*, vol. 38 no. 4 (2008), p. 6.

<sup>89</sup> *Oldham Chronicle*, 11 May 1901, Saddleworth Museum Archives, M/2/7.

<sup>90</sup> *Return of Owners of Land 1873, vol. II, York, West Riding* (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1875), p. 43.

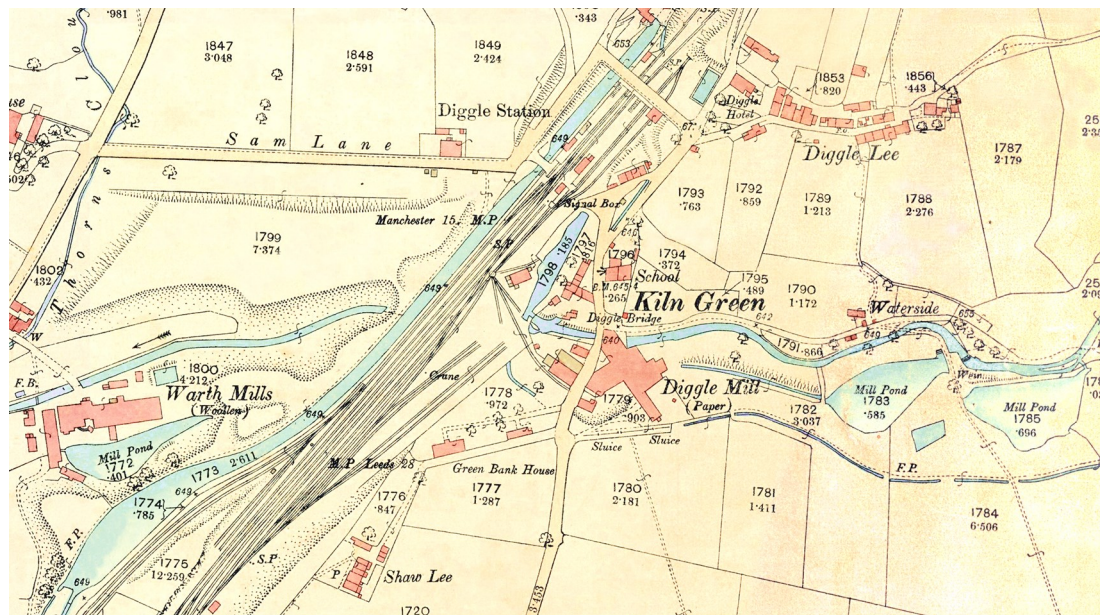
<sup>91</sup> GHFP.

<sup>92</sup> William Howson, the schoolmaster, originated from Giggleswick. There were eleven boarders, with ages ranging from 8-16, and two of his own young children. The scholars came from Manchester, Marsden, Northumberland, Sedburgh, Stalybridge and four from Saddleworth, Census 1861.

<sup>93</sup> 'A Father's Letter to His Sons -1874', *SHSB*, vol. 22, no. 3 (1992), p. 20.

However Harrow confirmed that neither boy is recorded as a former pupil. Marshal Legh was later recorded as having a public school education. The two older sons of William Dehown were at boarding school in 1861 so it seems possible that the younger children would also be educated in a similar manner, but where has not yet been ascertained.

The 1894 OS 25inch to 1 mile map (surveyed 1888-92) shows the mill probably at its largest, still spanning the Brook and expanded towards the mill race. There were three dams providing water and a weir at Waterside supplying at least one of them. From memory, in the early 1960s, the remains of the bleaching vats were alongside the brook just upstream from the covered stream section. Across the road there were three buildings one of which one was for stabling. Greenbank House and Greenbank Cottage backed onto the lane to Shaw Lee; the map shows the canal water channel in the gardens. Lee Side was opposite the lane to Back o'th' Lee and William Dehown's model farm is shown at Lee Cross, (rebuilt after a fire in the 1960s). The railway arrived in Diggle in 1847 and Diggle Paper Mill obtained its own private siding. At this stage there were only two tunnels and the canal tunnel had not yet been extended. William Dehown Hall had apparently invested in the North Western Railway Co., the *London Gazette* of 5 May 1908 records that he still held dormant funds under his name!<sup>94</sup>



1892/94 OS map<sup>95</sup>

**Figure 13 Diggle Paper Mill**

In the 1850s the fortunes of William Dehown Hall took a turn for the worst. We have already discovered that the two brothers parted company in 1853 and that John Sherbrooke Hall went on to make his fortune as a cotton spinner. It seems that the paper mill was rarely out of the news. *The Huddersfield Chronicle*, recorded the following incidents:-<sup>96</sup>

On 18 February 1854: 'Accident at Diggle Paper Mill, James Savill of Diggle was seriously injured by the willow machine, being torn in a frightful manner as he was cleaning the still working machine.'<sup>97</sup> Only seven days later: here was a 'Serious Fire at Diggle Paper Mill' when a new part of the building was destroyed along with 'a very valuable paper cutting machine, a quantity of timber, a stock of paper ready for dispatch and materials for making

<sup>94</sup> 'LNWR lands belonging to the Halifax Joint Stock Banking Co., tenants for life of W.D. Hall without power of sale. Set up in 1890', *London Gazette*, 5 May 1908, p. 1676.

<sup>95</sup> Buckley et al., *Mapping Saddleworth*, (Saddleworth Historical Society, 2007), p. 137.

<sup>96</sup> *Huddersfield Chronicle & West Yorkshire Advertiser (HCWYA)*.

<sup>97</sup> *HCWYA*, 18 February 1854.

paper'.<sup>98</sup> Four months later, on 3 June, the heading was 'Short Weights at Diggle Paper Mill'.<sup>99</sup>

William Dehown's connections within the paper making industry were recognised when the *London Gazette* recorded on 15 December 1855 that he was party to a trust to administer the estate of Robert Hughes a paper maker from Bury.<sup>100</sup> The headlines continue on 22 August 1857: 'Violent Storm Washes Away Bleaching Shed' and also part of the weir.<sup>101</sup> Having survived the misfortunes of the last few years the newspaper reported on 16 January 1858:

'On Monday last W.D. Hall esq. of Diggle Paper Mill kindly treated all his work hands, upwards of 30 in number to a good substantial dinner.... The company duly appreciated the kindness of their employer - rapturously drinking his health, that of his wife and family, in full bumpers, to which they coupled lasting prosperity to Diggle paper works, Mr. Hall responded and said that nothing gave him greater pleasure than to see his workpeople enjoy themselves in a social manner, and so long as he lived they should always have a similar New Year's Treat.'<sup>102</sup>

However the promises would prove to be hollow, there were further problems ahead. In March 1860 the headline was 'Destructive Fire at The Diggle Paper Mill'.<sup>103</sup> Two months later on 31 May the headline read:

'Fire at a Paper Mill in Saddleworth'

'On Monday night, a fire broke out in the cutting room of the paper mill of Mr Hall of Diggle Saddleworth, in consequence of some paper cuttings, which a youth was carrying, coming into contact with a gas light. An alarm was immediately given, and an attempt made to stop the progress of the flames by means of buckets of water: but the roof fell in in a very short time, and the fire was not got under until a fire engine from the Royal George Mill had been at work for some hours. The portion of the mill where the fire raged was three storeys high, and the roof and the floors have fallen in. There was a very heavy stock of paper in the mill, and a large portion of machinery has been destroyed. The damage is estimated as between £5,000 and £6,000. The machinery and building is insured in the London and Liverpool office, but the stock was only partially insured, and Mr Hall will suffer considerably by the disastrous occurrence.'<sup>104</sup>

*The Oldham Chronicle's* headline on 9 December 1860 was: 'The Late Fire at Diggle Paper Mill -Mr. W. D. Hall begs to return his warmest thanks to all friends and neighbours who kindly assisted to extinguish the destructive fire at his mill on the 28th inst.'<sup>105</sup>

Further trouble for the Halls came in October 1863, when *The London Gazette* recorded that James Shaw of Knowe [Knowl Top], a woollen cloth manufacturer, had been declared a debtor on 20 August 1863 and that he had agreed to pay his creditors, John Hall and William Dehown Hall, both of Diggle, paper manufacturers, 6s in the pound by promissory notes.<sup>106</sup> Knowl Top, otherwise known as Pinfold, was part of the estate of James Hall left in trust to

<sup>98</sup> HCWYA, 25 February 1854.

<sup>99</sup> HCWYA, 3 June 1855.

<sup>100</sup> *London Gazette*, 18 December 1855, p. 4764.

<sup>101</sup> HCWYA, 22 August 1857.

<sup>102</sup> HCWYA, 16 January 1858.

<sup>103</sup> HCWYA, 10 March 1860 and 1 May 1860.

<sup>104</sup> HCWYA, 31 May 1860.

<sup>105</sup> *Oldham Chronicle*, 9 December 1860.

<sup>106</sup> *London Gazette*, 13 October 1863, pp. 48-49.

John and William. Less than two years later, on 8 April 1865, the *Oldham Chronicle*, again reported 'Fire at Diggle Paper Mill.'<sup>107</sup>

William Dehown had sufficient problems already but he embarked on another venture that contributed to his fall from prosperity to poverty.

### **William Dehown Hall and Yewtree Paper Mill**

Originally Yewtree mill was a scribbling mill built in 1793 and from 1818 a cotton spinning mill, Later in the 1830s, it manufactured woollens. In 1846 a Manchester based cotton spinner, Hugh Shaw, was the owner and according to the Church Rate Book the mill was in ruins in 1852 but was later revived for paper making.<sup>108</sup> William Dehown had some involvement with the estates of Hugh Shaw which involved Yewtree. In 1859 an indenture was drawn up between James Wrigley of Scouthead, cotton spinner, on the first part, Samuel Wrigley Leach of Waterhead Mill warehouse man, now of Audenshaw, coal master and John Mallalieu of Rishworth, gentleman, on the second part, Hugh Shaw, late of Manchester, now of Pownall Hall, Cheshire, cotton spinner, owner of Yewtree on the third part and William Dehown Hall of Diggle, in the fourth part, concerning several estates of Hugh Shaw including the Laceby estate. In May 1863 William Dehown Hall, who may have been in financial difficulties, mortgaged the estates to the Saddleworth Banking Co. The Bank released the estate to William Sykes of Bleakhey Nook, a cotton waste dealer in October 1864.<sup>109</sup> Paper making at Yewtree Mill was under the ownership of William Dehown, the actual chronology is difficult to determine. His letter to his two boys at Harrow written 1874 was written on headed note paper that included Yewtree Mill in the letter head but it doesn't imply that it was still in operation.

His problems continued when the Buckleys, owners of Thornsclough Mill, complained about Yewtree Mill allowing dirty water into Thornsclough which it was claimed affected the quality of their cloth. The affair culminated in a protracted court case at York, £100s were spent on witnesses and eventually Mr Hall lost the case and had to pay costs which it was estimated to be between £3,000 and £8,000.<sup>110</sup>

Matters came to a head when the *Oldham Chronicle* advertised Diggle Paper Mill for sale by auction on 15 September 1866:

'Important to Paper manufacturers, Rag merchants, waste dealers Farmers, Brokers and Others - Sale of Valuable Miscellaneous Property under Distract of Rent - J.B. Kynder is instructed to advertise for SALE BY AUCTION on WEDNESDAY, September 19th 1866 commencing at 12 noon prompt on the premises known as Diggle Paper Mills, Diggle Saddleworth, in the County of York- The valuable MATERIAL - used in the manufacture of paper, principally consists of about 18 tons of Esparto or Spanish Grass, Dressed and Undressed Black rags and Cotton Waste, Linen, Surat's. Ropes, bagging, and other Old paper: also a capital stock of the usual Chemicals and other articles required. And the machinery and tools in the smith's and millwright's shops, large Wood Cisterns, a quantity of new timber, scrap and Wrought Iron, piping, Shafting, Pulleys, Spur wheels, Portable Scales, Patent Blocks, Shear Legs, Dandy Rollers, Copper Rollers, Steel Chopping Knives, Also RAILWAY COAL TRUCKS, four valuable DRAUGHT HORSES, CARTS, LURRIS and GEARS; together with a quantity of well-got HAY, and the whole of the loose effects on the premises - Detailed particulars (as in posting bills) may be had from the

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<sup>107</sup> *Oldham Chronicle*, 8 April 1865.

<sup>108</sup> B. Barnes, 'The Early Cotton Industry in Saddleworth', *SHSB*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1979), p. 82.

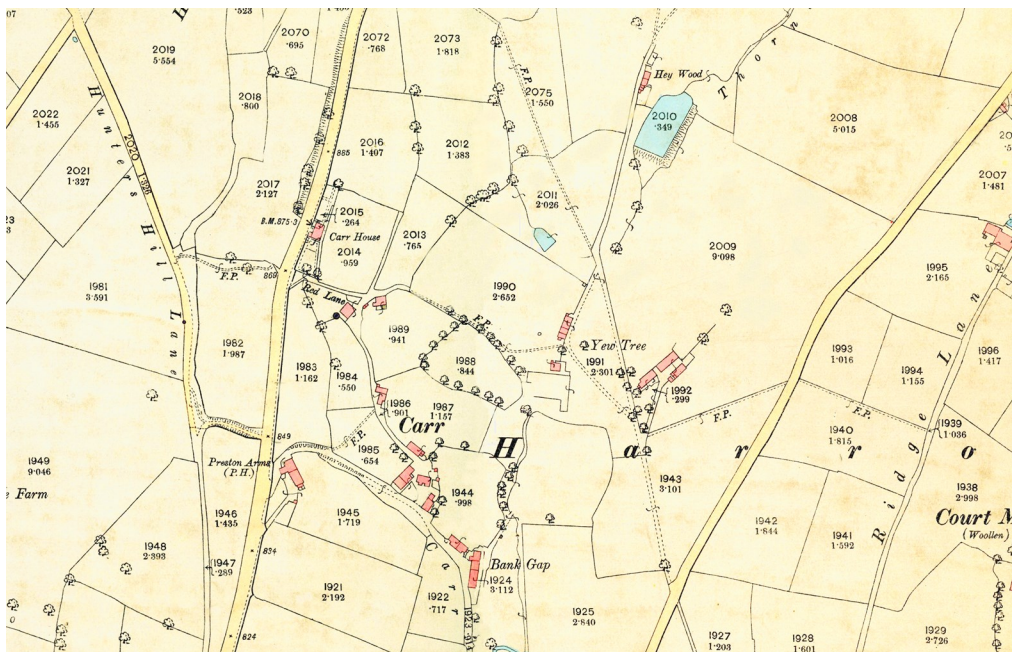
<sup>109</sup> 'Old Saddleworth, Laceby, indenture 1859', *SHSB*, vol. 12, no. 1 (1982), p.17.

<sup>110</sup> *Oldham Chronicle*, 11 May 1901.

Auctioneer, Dukinfield, and 154 Stamford Street, Ashton-under-Lyne,<sup>111</sup>

On 18 September 1866 William Dehown Hall of Diggle in the parish of Saddleworth in the County of York, who had petitioned for adjudication of bankruptcy, was adjudged bankrupt. This was reported in the *London Gazette* on 21 September 1866.<sup>112</sup> Further on 14 February 1868 it recorded that ‘creditors may receive first dividend of 3s 4½d in the pound.’<sup>113</sup> Despite this he continued as a trustee of his father’s will and hence was able to continue trading. Ben Brierley writing in 1867 comments that the paper mill was a very busy place working from the early hours of Monday morning until late on Saturday night.<sup>114</sup>

The paper making industry as a whole was in crisis in the two decades from 1850. There were shortages of old rags upon which much of the industry depended. The problem was exacerbated by the excise duty imposed on rags, the fact that overseas manufacturers such as France were free to import British rags and the paper when made was also taxed. The paper tax was dubbed a ‘Tax on Knowledge’. In 1861 the duty on paper was removed after public pressure but rather than help individual paper makers it increased the competition to provide for the rapidly increasing numbers of newspapers now available. Many producers changed from quality white paper production to brown wrapping paper and thinner paper for use by shopkeepers which was less expensive to produce.<sup>115</sup> A.M. Crossley makes reference to brown paper being produced at Diggle.<sup>116</sup> By the 1870s the increasing use of wood products for paper making replaced the dependence on old rags as the chief ingredient.



1892-4 OS map<sup>117</sup>

**Figure 14 Yew Tree Mill**

**The mill is shown here as derelict, the only evidence today is the once covered water course, now exposed**

<sup>111</sup> *Oldham Chronicle*, 15 September 1866.

<sup>112</sup> *London Gazette*, 21 September 1866, p. 5178.

<sup>113</sup> *London Gazette*, 14 February 1868, p. 754.

<sup>114</sup> Ben Brierley JP, ‘Diggle as I Knew it in 1867’, *SHSB*, vol. 45, no. 4 (2015), p. 93.

<sup>115</sup> D. Wynne, ‘Reading Victorian Rags: Recycling, Redemption and Dickens’s Ragged Children’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, vol. 20, issue 1, (2014), pp 34-39; ‘Taxes on Knowledge’, Wikipedia.org, accessed 22 Sept. 2017; *A Free Trader, The paper and rag duties considered in a letter addressed to Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone MP*, (Reynolds, 1860), p. 5.

<sup>116</sup> A. M. Crossley: Letter: ‘Bradbury of Fairbanks, paper workers 1861-1871’, *SHSB*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1973), p. 14.

<sup>117</sup> Buckley et al., *Mapping Saddleworth*, (Saddleworth Historical Society, 2007), p. 133.

At such a juncture one expects the saga to end with William losing everything. He was still a trustee of his father's will and so the Paper Mill continued. In 1871 the census records that he was still at Greenbank House as a paper maker and employed 28 men. Sons Herbert William, John Heginbottom, and Arthur Wellesley were still at home and listed as paper makers. In nearby Shaw Lee lived a groom, most likely employed by William Dehown. William was listed as of Diggle Paper Mill in 1871 when he sold Pinfold. In 1881 Arthur and Stanley, both paper makers, lived at Greenbank House with parents Mary and William Dehown Hall, still styled as a paper maker. Marshall Legh, a paper maker, and his wife Sarah had commenced married life in Diglee. It was only in 1891 that Diggle Paper Mill and the house at Greenbank was sold to the highest bidder (in fact the only bidder) for £1,000.<sup>118</sup> In the 1890 electoral register William Dehown's abode was Woolroad, in 1893 he was at Brownhill Bridge, and in 1895 had moved to Moorgate Street Uppermill but still retained his voting rights through ownership of property at Shaw Lee.<sup>119</sup> William and Mary had now lost all the trappings of the wealth their hard work had created. Mary died in July 1898.<sup>120</sup> In 1899 William was found unconscious having fallen whilst out for an afternoon stroll near his old haunts at Church Bank. Dr Ramsden treated him for concussion and a severe cut to his forehead.<sup>121</sup> William was a Freemason and had been a member of Candour Lodge Uppermill from 1857.<sup>122</sup> The Lodge awarded him an annuity of £40 per year for the last eleven years of his life because of his reduced circumstances.<sup>123</sup> In 1901 William Dehown Hall was a boarder with widow Ann Corson on Shaw Lee when he died 2 May 1901.<sup>124</sup> He left no will. The *Oldham Evening Chronicle* reported on Saturday 4 May 1901:

‘Death of Mr W. D. Hall From Affluence to Poverty’

‘Mr. William D. Hall of Diggle died on Sunday night last at the age of 78 years. The deceased was well known throughout Saddleworth. At one time while in his prosperous days he owned the greater part of Diggle but he ultimately met with business losses which ruined him. He was the son of James Hall woollen manufacturer and American merchant and, with his father, started the Diggle paper mills. It is said that at one time he was worth over £30,000. He also had a carriage and pair and each of his sons had a horse. Hall in fact lived a life of luxury. Deceased built Greenbank House, Diggle, a residence and by strange coincidence he died in a wooden hut as a lodger of Mrs Corson, a widow. He was a pensioner of the Masonic order and had received close upon £600 from the annuity. He was a trustee of Ebenezer Congregational Church as well as Kiln Green Sunday School Diggle. The only mourners at the funeral were his son Stanley, with wife and three children, and two or three neighbours. The Reverend H. Doig officiated.’<sup>125</sup>

William Dehown's youngest son Stanley, married Sarah Holt, a paper worker from Lee Side. With prospects of sharing the paper empire having disappeared he became a lorry man for his wife's grandfather in Ardwick in 1891. In 1901 he was back at Harrop Green still described as a paper maker and in 1911 a carter at Lee Side. Stanley and Sarah's children had occupations similar to other Diggle families: a railway porter, an iron turner, no doubt at the Loom Works, and a woollen piecer.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>118</sup> A. Wrigley, *Saddleworth Chronological Notes*, (Geo. Whittaker and Son, 1940), p. 77; The new occupier was Benjamin Williams, a mining agent for the third tunnel, 1891 census.

<sup>119</sup> West Riding Electoral Register, Polling Districts: Colne Valley COL 4/1 Dobcross HZ (1890), p. 10; Colne Valley COL 2/3 Dobcross IQ (1893), p.4; Colne Valley 4/1 Uppermill (1895), p. 4.

<sup>120</sup> England & Wales Civil Registration Death Index 1837-1915, available at ancestry.co.uk.

<sup>121</sup> Paul Fryer, ‘A Grim Diary of Saddleworth 2’, *SHSB*, vol. 39, no. 3 (2009), p. 81.

<sup>122</sup> Freemason Membership Registers, available at ancestry.co.uk.

<sup>124</sup> Ann Corson's husband was once one of William's paper makers, 1891 and 1901 censuses.

<sup>125</sup> *Oldham Chronicle*, 4 May 1901.

<sup>126</sup> Censuses 1891, 1901, and 1911.

Marshall Legh Hall had moved to Shaw Lee in 1887, Hey Top, Greenfield in 1891 as a cotton waste bleacher and then in 1894 moved to Stockport Road and later Sharon where he was a flat card nailer.<sup>127</sup> In 1911 an *Oldham Chronicle* headline read

‘Killed by an express at Greenfield’

‘Marshall Hall of Sharon, Greenfield, was knocked down by an express train whilst taking a short and cut to one of his fields. He was the son of the late W.D. Hall who formerly owned a great part of Diggle, the deceased had a public school education.’<sup>128</sup>

Marshall’s son Pte. William Victor Hall, born 1886, was killed on 27 August 1918 in the First World War, aged 33. He is buried in Croisilles British cemetery and commemorated on Pots and Pans memorial, Springhead plaque, at Lydgate church, at Royal George Friezland and at St.Chad’s. William lived at Sharon, Greenfield and enlisted in 1916 in the 21st Coldstream Guards as an officer’s servant. Before enlisting he had worked at Diggle Paper Mill.<sup>129</sup>

The ‘James Hall and Sons’ story spans four generations. They are just one of the many Saddleworth families who rose on the back of the rapid changes and innovations in textile production, from tenants and subsistence farmers to the heights of entrepreneurship creating huge businesses stretching across the Atlantic and seeking fortunes in far off lands. They participated in the great journey of their time creating road, canal, rail and shipping networks. Their success created employment for others, brought affluence for themselves and promoted them to public figures and benefactors. Unfortunately, some fell by the wayside, like William Dehown Hall, overtaken by personal circumstances or misfortunes in business. Much of today’s Saddleworth scene is a legacy of the James Hall and Sons generations: three story looms houses, old textile mills, dams covered by reeds and wildlife, large detached houses, rows of two up and two down cottages, and converted farmsteads with datestones inscribed with tantalising initials.

### Corrigenda to Part 1 of this article

Mary Mallalieu who married James Hall (2) on 29 September 1774 is incorrectly shown on Pedigree A, (p. 76) as having been baptised 23 August 1752, the daughter of Henry Mallalieu of Furlane. There were two baptisms that year of Mary Mallalieu and she was in fact the daughter of John Mallalieu, clothier and Mary his wife of Cloughbottom who was baptised on the 12 April of the same year.

Figure 3 showing High Stile Cottages (p.68) was attributed to source unknown, it is in fact from Saddleworth Museum Archives. Thanks to Peter Fox, curator, for permission to use this photograph.

Figure 5 showing Sherbrooke Cottage (p.70) was wrongly attributed to the author, it is in fact from the Peter Fox Collection and thanks are due to him for permission to publish the photograph.

Figure 7 should read ‘Diggle Paper Mill in 1854 (OS 6in to 1 mile)’

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<sup>127</sup> West Riding Electoral Register: Colne Valley, COL 1/1, Dobcross, no. 3 (1887), p. 11; Colne Valley COL 3/1 Mossley Yorkshire Ward KP (1894), p 20; Colne Valley COL 3/1, Mossley Yorkshire Ward (1900), p. 16; Colne Valley, Saddleworth, Friezland (1911), p. 2; 1891 census.

<sup>128</sup> *Oldham Chronicle*, 26 July 1911.

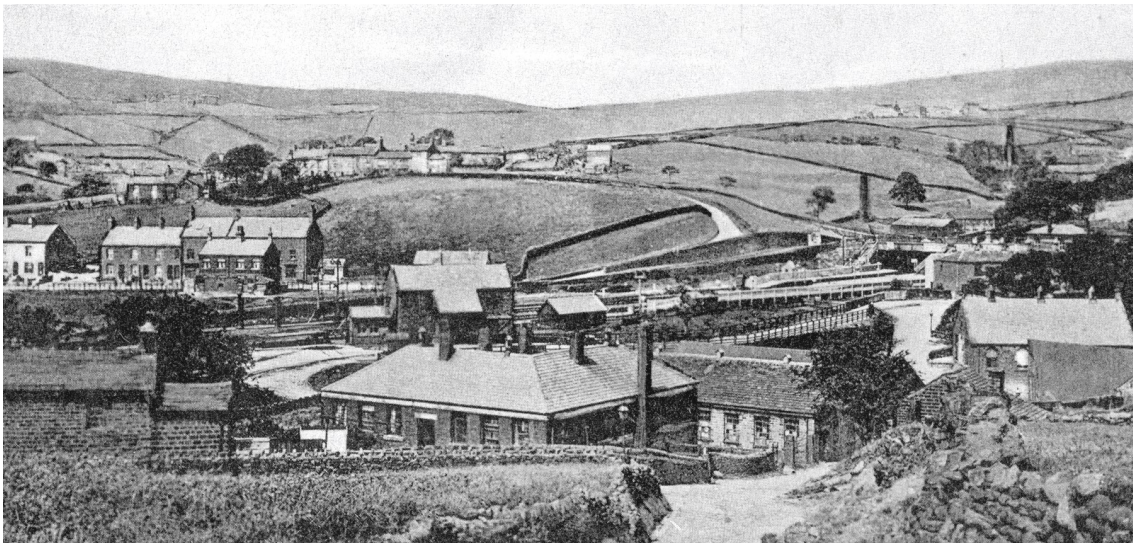
<sup>129</sup> William Hall is remembered on both the Royal George and Springhead plaques K. W. Michinson, *Saddleworth 1914-1919*, (SHS, 1995), p. 196.



*E Brooke | Saddleworth Museum Archive*

**Figure 15 Diggle Paper Mill from Harrop Green**

Figure 15 Looks across the railway lines to Diggle Paper Mill. The 1840s chimney is on the left and between it and Kilngreen Sunday school are the post-fire rebuilds using the original foundations as the orientation suggests. Next to the chimney is the only remaining original complete building c.1840s. On the road side is the 1900s curved roof above the loading doors, still in use in the late 1960s. Behind that building on the roadside are the first floor walls and window spaces of the original building. Above this it is hard to make out the line of offices which may have been the original cottages that the Halls occupied. Across the road the stables survive. Greenbank House is on the right of the picture with the cottages in the nearby trees. Lee Side is at the top of the lane and the pre-fire sloping roof of the model farm can be seen on the horizon.



*Saddleworth Museum Archive*

**Figure 16 Diggle Paper Mill from Lee Side**

Figure 16 shows Massey's new laundry and the gateway to the big house with Kilngreen Church middle right.

## **SADDLEWORTH NOTICES AND REPORTS FROM THE LEEDS INTELLIGENCER: PART 4, 1795-1796**

**Howard Lambert**

**26th January 1795**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS and CREDITORS.**

ALL Persons who stood indebted unto DANIEL WOOLLEY, of Carrhill, in Saddleworth, in the County of York, Clothier, at the time of his decease, are required to pay their respective debts unto his Executors Daniel Woolley of Carrhill aforesaid, or John Howard of Lane, in Healey, in the Parish of Mottram and County of Chester ; And all Persons to whom the said Daniel Woolley stood indebted, are requested to send in their Accounts to the said Daniel Woolley or John Howard, in order to their being examined and discharged. JANUARY 13th, 1795.

Editorial Note: Daniel Woolley of Carr-Hill, presumably the elder, was a tenant of William Creswell, owner of Carr-hill, in 1788.<sup>1</sup> In 1791 at the sale of the manor properties, he purchased the fulling mill at Hob-hole, variously known as Quick Mill or later Wright's Mill, for £1,200.<sup>2</sup> Presumably he had died shortly before this notice and Daniel Woolley, the younger, the executor, was in possession of the property in 1800. He was also then renting Carr-Hill from Creswell and in addition half of Andrew Mill at Quick and was the owner of a dye-house and an engine at or near Carr-Hill.<sup>3</sup> The whereabouts of the engine is not clear from the records - it could have been associated with Andrew Mill or possibly the newly erected cotton mill built around this time by Creswell on his estate. The will of Daniel Woolley of Saddleworth, clothier, presumably the younger, was proved on 18th April 1803.<sup>4</sup>

**27th April 1795**

**KENWORTHY'S BANKRUPTCY. APRIL 16th 1795**

WHEREAS a Commission of Bankrupt is awarded and issued against JAMES KENWORTHY, of Quick in the Parish of Saddleworth, in the County of York, Dyer, Clothier, Dealer and Chapman, and he being declared a Bankrupt, is hereby required to surrender himself to the Commissioners in the said Commission named, or the major part of them, on the first, second, and twenty-third Days of May next, at Ten o'clock in the forenoon of each of the said days, at the House of Thomas Green, the Sign of the Queen's Head in Huddersfield, in the said County of York, and make a full Discovery and Disclosure of his Estate and Effects; when and where the creditors are to come prepared to prove their debts, and at the second sitting to choose Assignees, and at the last sitting the said Bankrupt is required to finish his Examination, and the Creditors are to assent to, or dissent from the Allowance of his Certificate.

Editorial Note: James Kenworthy and his brother, William Kenworthy, were the third generation of a prosperous family of woollen manufacturers and merchants. Their grandfather had purchased the freehold of the family estate at Quickwood and in addition had leased other manorial properties in Quick, among which were the fulling mills at Hob-hole. From a profitable fulling business the family expanded into dying and other branches of cloth manufacturing also trading as chapmen and wool staplers. Their imposing Manor House at Quickwood was built by the family, probably in the first half of the eighteenth century. The period up to the early 1790s was a period of boom in the woollen cloth industry and the

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<sup>1</sup> Indenture dated 26th July 1788 listing the tenants of William Creswell, registered at Wakefield and recited in an abstract of title to an estate at Quick in possession of the editor.

<sup>2</sup> West Yorkshire Archives, Leeds, 'Particulars of a very improvable Estate in Saddleworth .... to be sold .... the 28th Day of March 1791 and the five following Days...' Lot 66. The document is annotated with the names of the purchasers of each farm and the amount paid, RSD 305 (C/9). The deed of sale from James Farrer to Daniel Woolley and John Buckley of Tunstead was dated 25 November 1791, West Yorkshire History Centre, Wakefield (WYHC), Registry of Deeds, DI 380.

<sup>3</sup> WYHC, Township of Quick, Upper Agbrigg Division, Land Tax Assessment, 1800.

<sup>4</sup> Lancashire Archives, WCW Supra, 1803, Will of Daniel Woolley of Saddleworth, clothier.

Kenworthys, like many other local master clothiers, were borrowing and investing heavily. The downturn that followed brought about financial ruin for many as well as great poverty for the cloth workers locally.<sup>5</sup>

## 22nd June 1795

### TURNPIKE-ROAD

From MUMPS BROOK, within Oldham, in the County of Lancaster, to RIPPONDEN, in the West Riding of the County of York. NOTICE is hereby given, That the next Meeting of the Trustees for putting in execution an Act of Parliament made and passed in the thirty-fifth year of the Reign of his present Majesty, instituted “an Act for making and maintaining a Turnpike Road from Mumps Brook, within Oldham in the County Palatine of Lancaster, to Ripponden, in the West Riding of the County of York; and a Branch therefrom at or near Denshaw, to or near to Brownhill; and another Branch therefrom at or near Grains to Delph, all within Saddleworth in the said Riding,” WILL BE HELD BY Adjournment at the Angel Inn in Oldham aforesaid, on Thursday the second Day of July next, at Ten o’clock in the forenoon, for the further Execution of the said Act.

George WORTHINGTON, Clerk to the said Trustees. Altrincham, 18 June 1795.

Editorial Note: The first meeting held to consider applying for an Act of Parliament was held at the Falcon Inn, Littleborough on 27 August 1794. The Act was passed in early in 1795. This was one of the regular meetings of the Trustees which took place prior to the opening of the main section from Oldham to Ripponden on 1 January 1798. The branch to Brownhill was never completed but terminated at Dobcross on the newly created branch of the Oldham to Standedge Road through Dobcross which incorporated an improved Sugar Lane and Woods Lane; had it been built it would presumably have followed Nicker Brow. The stone plaque listing the tolls, which was originally on the Toll House on Platt Lane, is now in Saddleworth Museum.<sup>6</sup>

## 6th July 1795

### BUCKLEY’S BANKRUPTCY, June 27th 1795

WHEREAS a Commission of Bankrupt is awarded and issued against Henry Buckley of Grasscroft, within Saddleworth, in the County of York, Clothier, Dealer and Chapman, and he being declared a Bankrupt is hereby required to surrender himself to the Commissioners in the said Commission named, or the major part of them, on the thirteenth and fourteenth days of July next, and on the eighth Day of August following, at Ten o’clock in the forenoon on each of the said days, at the Bridgwater Arms, in Manchester, in the County of Lancaster, and make a full Discovery and Disclosure of his Estate and Effects; when and where the Creditors are to come prepared to prove their debts, at the second sitting to choose Assignees, and at the last sitting the said Bankrupt is required to finish his Examination, and the creditors are to assent to, or dissent from the Allowance of his Certificate.

Editorial Note: Henry Buckley had inherited a large estate at Grasscroft which had been held by the family as a freehold since 1599. It included all the land on the east of Clough Lane and the main residence from the eighteenth century was the Manor House, off Clough Lane. Henry Buckley had built a scribbling and spinning mill and had been borrowing money on a mortgage originally taken out by his father in 1770. Originally for £500, by his bankruptcy, he was indebted by £2000. The bankruptcy was awarded on 16 June 1795 his occupation then being described as ‘clothier, dealer and chapman in buying wool and in other materials manufacturing the same into cloth and selling the same when so made.’ His estate was sold shortly afterwards to various parties. He moved to Stalybridge afterwards and died 5 March 1809 in his 52nd year. He is buried at Lydgate and his gravestone records his death and those of other members of his family<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Daniel Neild, a surgeon of Lees, published a pamphlet in 1795 entitled *Addresses to the different classes of men in the Parish of Saddleworth ...* in which he described the poverty then gripping the district. Reprinted (SHS, 1983).

<sup>6</sup> For a full account of the road see B. Barnes, *Passage through Time: Saddleworth Roads and Trackways - a History*, (Saddleworth Historical Society, 1981), pp. 61-69.

<sup>7</sup> Details from an abstract of title to land at Grasscroft, SHSA, Julian Hunt Cabinet Collection H/JH/CAB/Grasscroft/Manor House.

### 6th July 1795

On Friday se'nnight died, much regretted by a numerous acquaintance, Mr. Samuel Bottomley, of Saddleworth, author of the Poem on Greenfield, as well as various other poetical pieces.

Author's Note: Samuel Bottomley was christened on 17 December 1738 at Saddleworth Church, the son of Michael Bottomley, a clothier, and Sarah (née Andrew) of Pobjgreen. A clothier and one time innkeeper at the Cross Keys Inn, he is renowned as the author of *Greenfield: A Poem*, originally published in 1792. A later edition of this epic poem was printed in 1816, which included a historical sketch of Saddleworth, found amongst his effects, plus engravings by James Butterworth.<sup>8</sup>

### 27th July 1795

#### SADDLEWORTH

TO be SOLD by AUCTION, (By the Assignees of WILLIAM KENWORTHY, a Bankrupt) At the House of William Andrew, the sign of the Ram, in Lydgate, in Saddleworth, in the County of York, on Thursday the Thirteenth Day of August next, between the Hours of two and five in the afternoon of the same day, under and subject to such conditions as will be then and there produced. ALL that DESIRABLE FREEHOLD ESTATE, situated and being at Quickwood, in Saddleworth aforesaid, consisting of Four Messuages or tenements with excellent Gardens, Barns, Stables, and Cow-Houses, Two Dye-Houses, Five Cottages, a Kiln, and other outbuildings to the same belonging. And also several CLOSES of LAND, Meadow, Pasture and Wood Ground, called or commonly known by the several Names of the Great Haddans, the Little Haddans, the Four Acres, the Park, the Tenter Field, the Little Field, the Brenthill Field, the Great Meadow, the Woolwall Field, the Higher Solomon's Wood, the Nursery, and the Lower Solomon's Wood, containing together by estimation Twenty-four Acres and Sixteen Perches, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and now are or late were in the several Tenures or Occupations of the said William Kenworthy, James Wright, the Rev. Thomas Seddon, John Winterbottom, William Andrews, James Lees, Jonas Robinson, James Fielding, and Samuel Scholefield, their Assigns or Undertenants.

Also, all that LEASEHOLD ESTATE, situated and being at or near to Quickwood aforesaid, commonly called or known by the name of the HIGH-FIELD ESTATE, consisting of Four Cottages or Tenements, with the Outbuildings and Appurtenances to the same belonging ; and two Closes of Arable, Meadow or Pasture Ground, called or known by the several names of the Little Brooks Field and the Great Brooks Field, containing by estimation Five Acres, Two Roods and Twenty-seven Perches, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and now are or late were in the several Tenures or Occupations of the said William Kenworthy, James Wright, James Shaw, Humphrey Andrews, William Greenoff, and George Lawton, their Assigns or Undertenants. The Leasehold Premises are held under a Demise for Nine Hundred and ninety-nine years, about forty years of which only are now expired, subject to an annual outpayment of three pounds fifteen shillings. The Freehold Premises are subject to a yearly annuity of fifteen pounds, during the life of a lady who is now about sixty years of age. N.B. The Estates are delightfully situated, commanding a prospect of several Counties, and having a Turnpike-Road passing directly through them, and the Line of the Huddersfield Canal being very near the same, render them both very desirable either for a Gentleman or Tradesman. The said William Kenworthy will shew the Premises ; and further Particulars may be had by applying to Mr. Joseph Brook and Mr Robert Firth, both of Huddersfield, in the said County of York, the Assignees ; or to Mr. Stables, of the same place, Attorney at Law.

Editorial Note: William Kenworthy, the elder brother of James Kenworthy, had inherited the family estate at Quickwood. And like his brother James's estate at Husteads, it too had been

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<sup>8</sup> For an account of Samuel Bottomley, his poem, and the significance of his work, see V. Khadem, 'Landscape, History and Folklore in Samuel Bottomley's *Greenfield: a Poem*', in N. Smith (ed), *History in the South Pennines: the Legacy of Alan Petford*, (Hebden Bridge Local History Society, 2017), pp. 305-342.

heavily mortgaged to William Hardman. Hardman had foreclosed on the mortgage, on which a sum of £1,300 was still owed. The bankruptcy was announced in the *London Gazette* of 3 March 1795. The auction appears to have been only partially successful and a further auction took place at the Angel Inn, Oldham on 21 January 1796 at which the freehold part was up for sale again. Hardman, as the principal creditor was the ultimate purchaser.<sup>9</sup> Having paid his debts by the sale of the estate, land tax assessments show that Kenworthy was able to continue in business at Quickwood until his death in 1815.<sup>10</sup> It is also worth noting that the Ram Inn is now two private houses in Stockport Road, Lydgate; also that Thomas Seddon, curate of the newly erected Lydgate Chapel, was renting a house on the Quickwood estate.<sup>11</sup>

#### 14th September 1795

##### SADDLEWORTH

To be SOLD by AUCTION (By Order of the Assignees of the Estate and Effects of THOMAS WHITEHEAD, of Loadhill, within the Parish of Saddleworth, in West-Riding of the County of York, a Bankrupt). At the House of William Lawson, the Angel Inn, in Oldham in the County of Lancaster, at the hour of three in the afternoon of Thursday the first day of October next, subject to Conditions then and there to be produced, THE BENEFICIAL LIFE-ESTATE and INTEREST of the said THOMAS WHITEHEAD, of and in all that Capital and most Desirable FARM, situate at Loadhill aforesaid, consisting of a good Messuage and Tenement, with a Barn, Shippon, Stable, and other necessary Outbuildings ; together with several Pieces and Parcels of very rich Meadow and Pasture Ground, containing by estimation Seventeen Acres or thereabouts, be the same more or less; and also two Cottages or Dwelling-Houses, adjoining and belonging to the said Farm, which is now divided and in the several possessions of the said Thomas Whitehead, and of his Tenants, George Lawton, Thomas Ratcliffe, James Barnes, and Messrs. Jones's. The above Estate is about three miles distant from Oldham aforesaid, and worth, upon a moderate calculation, the sum of Ninety Pounds per Annum, and is charged with the Payment of the annual sum of Seven Pounds, to Robert Whitehead, son of the said Thomas Whitehead during his, the said Thomas Whitehead's natural Life. - said Thomas Whitehead enjoys a very good state of health, and is about forty-seven years of age. The several Tenants will shew the Premises ; and any enquiry respecting the same, will be answered by applying to Mr Edward Heelis, Attorney at Law, in Oldham aforesaid ; or at the office of R. Milne, Attorney at Law, in Rochdale, the Solicitor to the said Commission.

Editorial Note: The bankruptcy of Thomas Whitehead, of Loadhill, clothier, dealer and chapman, was announced in the *London Gazette* of 20 June 1795. It was further announced on 1 November 1796 that the bankruptcy, which had been awarded on 6 June 1795, had since been superseded. He died 4 January 1799 aged 55 years; and administration of his estate was granted the same year. He was then described as farmer.<sup>12</sup>

#### 12th October 1795

GAME DUTY. West-Riding of Yorkshire. A LIST of CERTIFICATES issued in the Riding aforesaid, with respect to the said Duty, between the first day of July and the twenty-fifth day of September 1795, pursuant to the Acts of Parliament granting duties on such Certificates.

Buckley, James of Saddleworth, gent

Harrop, James of Grascroft, gent

Harrop, Joseph of Grascroft, gent

<sup>9</sup> Details from an abstract of title to land at Grasscroft, SHSA, Julian Hunt Cabinet Collection H/JH/CAB/Grasscroft/Manor House.

<sup>10</sup> For an account of Samuel Bottomley, his poem, and the significance of his work, see V. Khadem, 'Landscape, History and Folklore in Samuel Bottomley's Greenfield: a Poem', in N. Smith (ed), *History in the South Pennines: the Legacy of Alan Petford*, (Hebden Bridge Local History Society, 2017), pp. 305-342.

<sup>11</sup> Mollie Jenkins has charted the fortunes of this family in her monumental study of the Kenworthy family: *A Very English Family*, (unpublished work, 2001). Saddleworth Historical Society Archives, H/GEN.

<sup>12</sup> The gravestone is in the Old Churchyard at St Chad's, Saddleworth. Transcription number 453 is recorded in M. Buckley (ed), *St Chad's Church, Saddleworth, Monumental Inscriptions in the Old Churchyard*, (SHS, 2015), p. 81; LA, Administration of Thomas Whitehead of Loadhill, Farmer, WCW Infra, 1799.

Harrop, James of Tame Water, gent  
 Harrop, Thomas of Dobcross, gent  
 Whitehead, Ralph of Saddleworth, gent  
 Wright, James of Saddleworth, gent

Editorial Note: Ralph Whitehead's interest in shooting was to prove fatal - see notice of 22 August 1796 below.

**7th December 1795**

SADDLEWORTH. To be SOLD by AUCTION, in the following LOTS, (By the ASSIGNEES of JAMES KENWORTHY, a Bankrupt) At the House of William Andrew, the sign of the Ram, in Lydgate, in Saddleworth, in the County of York, on Thursday the seventh day of January next, between the hours of two and four of the clock in the afternoon of the same Day, subject to such conditions as will be then and there produced,

LOT I ALL that Capital MESSUAGE or TENEMENT situate, standing and being at Quick, in Saddleworth, in the County of York, with the Cottages, Dyehouse, Barns, Stables, Mistall, Buildings, Gardens, and Appurtenances to the same adjoining and belonging ; and also several Closes of Arable Land, Meadow or Pasture Ground, situate, lying and being at Quick aforesaid, adjoining to the said Messuage and called or commonly known by the several names of High-Lane, the How Field, the Stove Field, the Well Meadow, the Lower Meadow, the Great Hey, the Upper Meadow, and the Barns Butt, containing by admeasurement 18A. 1R. 20P. (be the same, more or less) and now or late in the several Tenures or Occupations of Robert Kenworthy, William Buckley, William Whitehead, James Buckley and ----- Fogg.

N.B. Part of the Well Meadow, contained in the above Lot, is now under Lease, about Ten years of which are yet unexpired.

LOT II All the PIECE or PARCEL of LAND or GROUND situate, lying and being at Quick, in Saddleworth aforesaid, now occupied as a Garden, and adjoining the Turnpike-Road leading from Doctor-Lane-Head to Stockport ; together with several Closes of Land or Ground, situate, lying and being at Quick aforesaid, called or commonly known by the several names of the Little Meadow, the New Field, and the Round Field, containing by admeasurement 6A. 0R. 16P. (be the same more or less) all which last-mentioned Premises now are or late were in the Tenure or Occupation of William Whitehead. The New Field, and one half of the Little Meadow, contained in the second Lot, are subject to an Estate for Life, in the name of Mrs Kenworthy, Mother of the said James Kenworthy.

LOT III All those several MESSUAGES, COTTAGES, or DWELLING-HOUSES, situate, standing and being at Quick, in Saddleworth aforesaid, and adjoining to the said Turnpike leading to Stockport, with the Outbuildings and Appurtenances, to the same belonging ; and also one Cottage or Tenement, situate and being at or near Quick Mill in Saddleworth aforesaid, with the Barn, Shippon, and Outbuildings to the same belonging ; and also all those several Closes of Arable, Meadow or Pasture Ground, situate, lying and being at Quick aforesaid, and called or commonly known by the several names of the Short Ley, the Old Wood, the Gibb Knowl, the Thick Three Lands, The Slade Meadow, the Old Limed, the Tenter Field, and the Mill Meadow, containing together by admeasurement 14A. 0R. 17P. (be the same more or less) and now or late in the several Tenures or Occupations of Joshua Roberts, John Buckley, John Whitaker, and William Buckley. The Closes of Land or Ground in this Lot are now under Lease, - years of which are now to come, and unexpired.

LOT IV Two GROUND RENTS, annually issuing out of two new Dwelling-Houses, situate at Quick aforesaid; one payable by Robert Kenworthy, amounting to 1L.2s. the other payable by Mr John Gould, for 2L.19s. The above Premises are very pleasantly situated, the Lands well watered, and in a good state of Cultivation, and the Stockport Turnpike-Road going through the middle of the Estate, makes it very eligible for either a Merchant or Manufacturer. Mr. James Kenworthy of Mossley, in the County of Lancaster, Shopkeeper, will shew the Premises ; and further Particulars may be had by applying to Mr. Robert Firth, of Huddersfield, Dry-Salter ; Mr. Joseph Brooke, of the same place, Bookseller, the Assignees ; or Mr Stables, of Huddersfield aforesaid, Attorney at Law.

Editorial Note: James Kenworthy had built a mill at Husteads two years earlier and this was heavily mortgaged to William Hardman of Manchester. The mill was then described as ‘a large mill lately erected by James Kenworthy of Quick, clothier .... for carding, roving, scribbling and spinning wool and a large dyehouse and indigo mill and stove for drying of wool.’<sup>13</sup> Hardman foreclosing on the mortgage was probably the immediate cause of the bankruptcy. James Kenworthy had also acquired the above property at Near Quick from his mother the year before.<sup>14</sup> Following this auction the property was eventually sold in 1797 to John Gould.<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, James Kenworthy had been described in an earlier deed as clockmaker.<sup>16</sup>

### 23rd May 1796

Josiah Lawton’s Assignment.

WHEREAS JOSIAH LAWTON, of Dobcross, in Saddleworth, in the County of York, Innkeeper, hath by Indenture bearing date the Second Day of April 1796, assigned over all his Estate and Effects to George Brooke, of Wakefield, in the County of York, Wine Merchant, and William Bailey of Batty Mill, in the Parish of Kirkheaton and County of York, Maltster, for the equal Benefit of all his Creditors who shall accede to and execute the same on or before the Third Day of July next. NOTICE is hereby given that the said Assignment is lodged at the office of Mr. Lee, Attorney at Law, in Wakefield, aforesaid, for the Perusal and Execution of such of the said Creditors as choose to come in and execute the same within the Time abovementioned; and such as shall neglect or refuse to execute the said Indenture will be excluded the Benefit thereof. Wakefield, May 7th, 1796.

Editorial Note: Josiah Lawton was innkeeper at the Bull’s Head Inn, Dobcross. The building, no longer a public house, survives as number 25, Woods Lane and today, over the entrance, a datestone IAL 1756 records the initials of his parents Jonathan and Ann Lawton who were responsible for building the inn and ran it prior to Josiah taking over the license in about 1780. Lawton was still in business on 6 December 1798 when a meeting was held there but it ceased to be a public house shortly afterwards.<sup>17</sup> He died 8 March 1827 in his 88th year and was then of Woolroad. His gravestone is in the old churchyard at St Chad’s, Saddleworth and records that he was late of the Bull’s Head Inn, Dobcross.<sup>18</sup>

### 13th June 1796

SADDLEWORTH. To be SOLD by AUCTION,

At the Sign of the Bell, in Delph, in Saddleworth, in the County of York, on Thursday the 16th of June Inst, at Four in the Afternoon, A very Eligible and Improveable FREEHOLD ESTATE, situate at and near Hill End, in Saddleworth aforesaid, in the following Lots, (or in such others as may be agreed upon at the Time and Place of Sale) viz.

Lot 1. A Good substantial MESSUAGE, with suitable and convenient Barns, Stables, Outbuildings and Appurtenances, thereto belonging, and several Closes of Land therewith occupied, called the Midgreave Hey (now in six Closes) and the two Meadows, containing in all thirteen Acres or thereabouts, now in the Possession of Mr. Henry Buckley, his Tenants or Assigns.

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<sup>13</sup> 1 June 1793, Mortgage between James Kenworthy of Quick, clothier and William Hardman of Manchester, drysalter, WYHC, Registry of Deeds, DO 388.

<sup>14</sup> Indentures of lease and release dated 24 and 25 April 1794 between Alice Kenworthy, widow of William Kenworthy, merchant, on the first part and James Kenworthy of the second part. This is from an abstract of title to land at Near Quick in possession of the editor.

<sup>15</sup> Indentures of lease and release dated 2 and 3 August 1797 whereby the assignees of James Kenworthy conveyed the Near Quick estate to John Gould, later described as of Quick, clothier. From the abstract of title to land at Near Quick in possession of the editor.

<sup>16</sup> Indentures of lease and release dated 1 & 2 December 1791 between James Buckley and Joseph Brook of the first part, James Kenworthy, clockmaker of the second part and Mary Armitage of the third part, being a mortgage of the same premises. From the abstract of title to land at Near Quick in possession of the editor.

<sup>17</sup> West Yorkshire History Centre, Wakefield, John Goodchild Collection, Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth, 6 December 1798 at the house of Josiah Lawton, Dobcross, Innkeeper, JG001077.

<sup>18</sup> M. Buckley (ed), *Monumental Inscriptions in the Old Churchyard*, Transcription number 163.

Lot II. A MESSUAGE or FREEHOLD HOUSE, with the Barns, Stables, Outbuildings and Appurtenances thereto belonging, and several Closes of Land occupied therewith, called by the several Names of the Rye Field, now in two Closes, the Meadow, the Two Pingles, and another Meadow below the Road, containing together Eight Acres or thereabouts, in the Possession of Mr. Jonathan Hall, or his Undertenants.

Lot III. EIGHT DWELLING HOUSES, with their Appurtenances, (lately erected) in the several Possessions of Mr. Abraham Broadbent, Jonathan Lawton, John Lawton, John Longley, Henry Buckley, Samuel Lees, Samuel Whitehead, and Fanny Lees.

Lot IV. A Full undivided MOIETY, or equal HALF PART, of and in a good substantial Building (lately erected) and now used as a Fulling Mill, situate in a Close of Land called Midgreave Meadow at or near Hill End aforesaid; and also of and in all the Houses, Buildings, and Conveniences adjoining, or next and belonging thereto; and also of and in all Dams, Goits, Streams, Mill Gear, Wheels, Stocks. Engines, Utensils and Implements whatsoever, of or belonging to the same Mill, being now or late in the Possession of Mr. Henry Buckley, and Mr. Joseph Lawton, or their Undertenants.

Lot V. Several GROUND RENTS or ANNUAL PAYMENTS of Two Pounds - Ten Shillings - One Shilling - Seven Shillings - Two Shillings and Sixpence - Two Shillings and Sixpence, and Two Shillings and Sixpence, issuing and payable out or in respect of several Messuages or Dwelling-Houses, at Hill End aforesaid, in the several Possessions of John Wrigley, James Buckley, Edmund Whitehead, Robert Kenworthy, Daniel Whiteley, James Kenworthy, and John Whitehead or their Undertenants. The Estate is desirably situated in a populous trading Country, the Turnpike-Road from Wakefield to Manchester, and the Line of the intended Canal from Huddersfield to Ashton-under-Lyne being very near it. Further Particulars may be had of Mr. Henry Buckley, at Hill End aforesaid; Mr. Arthur Scholefield, of Standedge, near Delph; or of Mr. Swainson, Attorney, in Halifax.

Editorial Note: Henry Buckley had acquired a considerable amount of property at Hill End, including part of the former manorial estate at Midgreave. He was described as merchant but had apparently also developed the estate considerably during his ownership and in addition had built Lumb Mill jointly with Joseph Lawton. His property was mortgaged and this sale indicates that he was facing financial difficulties. Following the auction, the half share of the mill was sold to his partner Joseph Lawton of Delph, shopkeeper and the rest of the property to John Roberts of Delph.<sup>19</sup> Despite the sale his attempt to avoid bankruptcy apparently failed and the *London Gazette* of 19 September 1797, where he is referred to as Henry Buckley of Delph, Merchant Dealer and Chapman, indicated that he was then bankrupt. His will was proved 25 Apr 1801.<sup>20</sup>

## 22nd August 1796

We have to state the following melancholy accident which happened in the neighbourhood of Saddleworth, in this County, as a caution to those gentlemen who take the diversion of shooting in company with each other. - Mr. Ralph Whitehead, of Shaw-hall, and Mr. James Harrop, of Tame-Water, (a gentleman qualified to kill game) both in Saddleworth, went out on Monday last, with their servants, to kill moor game on the moors adjoining. - A moor cock was set up; at which Mr. Harrop presented his gun, and was about to fire, but in the moment of Mr. Harrop's firing, Mr. Whitehead unfortunately stepped a few paces forward, and received the contents of the gun in his shoulder, of which he instantly died. Mr. Harrop has ever since remained in a state of extreme distraction of mind; and what renders the circumstance more

<sup>19</sup> WYHC, Registry of Deeds, Indenture of Lease and Release dated 24 and 25 August 1796, the lease between George Casson of Halifax, gent, Henry Buckley of Hill End, merchant, Joseph Hemmingway of Wombwell, gent, James Lawton of Dobcross, shopkeeper and John Buckley of Barn, clothier, on the first part and Joseph Lawton of Delph, shopkeeper, of the second part, being a sale of the half the mill, DW 232; Indenture of 17 November 1796 between the executors of the will of Joseph Hemmingway of Swithin in Darton, farmer and malster and George Casson of Halifax, gent, on the first part, Henry Buckley of Hill End, merchant and John Buckley of Barn, clothier on the second part, and John Robert of Delph, clothier on the third part, being a sale of property at Hill End, DW 233.

<sup>20</sup> LA, Will of Henry Buckley of Delph, clothier, WCW Supra, 1801.

distressing is, that Mr. Whitehead has left a wife with six small children to lament his loss - The Coroner's jury sat upon the inquest on Wednesday last, and without hesitation returned a verdict of accidental death.

Editorial Note: The Whiteheads had occupied Shaw Hall as tenants from the end of the seventeenth century and Ralph Whitehead's mother, Ann Whitehead, then a widow, had purchased the freehold for £2000 at the sale of the manor in 1791. Ralph Whitehead died on 15 August 1796 in his 38th year. His youngest daughter Anna Maria Whitehead also died in tragic circumstances on 6 September 1813, aged 18 years, when a small canon burst while she was firing it, as part of a patriotic display, to celebrate the recent successes of the Marquess of Wellington in Spain. Ralph Whitehead's grandchildren, Ralph Radcliffe Whitehead and his three brothers, later established the firm R.R. Whitehead and Brothers of Royal George Mills and were founders of Friezland Church.<sup>21</sup>

### **26th September 1796**

There is now living at Cabin, in the parish of Saddleworth, near Oldham, of the name of Broadbent, a father and mother, a grandfather and grandmother, a stepfather and stepmother, sister and brother, uncle and aunt, man and wife - In all but two persons.

Editorial Note: It is not difficult to work out this riddle in principle but the names of all the relatives are more elusive. Robert Broadbent and Betty (formerly Smith), his wife, were married at Rochdale on 19 September 1791, both apparently widowed. They had two children, baptised at Hey Chapel: John on 6 August 1792 and Thomas, on 8 June 1794. Land Tax records indicate that he occupied part of Cabin as a tenant of Peter Seville, and was living there in 1790 before his marriage to Betty Smith.<sup>22</sup> Robert Broadbent of Cabin was buried at St Chad's Church, Saddleworth, on 1 September 1839, age 72 years.

Email : [howard.lambert@brent.gov.uk](mailto:howard.lambert@brent.gov.uk)

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<sup>21</sup> See 'The Whitehead Family', parts 1, 2 and 3, *SHSB*, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 5; vol. 1, no. 4, p. 1; and vol. 2, no. 1, p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> WYHC, Township of Quick, Upper Agbrigg Division, Land Tax Assessments, 1790 and 1800.

# THE LAMP EXPLOSION AT DENSRAW. FATAL RESULT. INQUEST AND VERDICT. A SINGULAR BLUNDER<sup>1</sup>

A singular circumstance arose in connection the the inquest on the body of Mr John Cocking, whose death took place on Saturday night as a result of the explosion of the public lamp in the Square, Denshaw, on Sunday week.

The inquest was called for the Co-operative Hall, Denshaw at 11.30 on Tuesday, and punctually at that time the jurymen put in an appearance. There were also present Mr E. Rowbotham, clerk to the Saddleworth district council, the owners of the lamp, And Mr E. Claydon of Oldham, representing deceased wife. Supt. Morley also attended, as well as Councillor Butterworth, a member of the Saddleworth Lighting committee. Representatives of the press were naturally in evidence. By 12 o'clock jurymen had begun to ask questions as to the non-appearance of the coroner, Mr Hill of Halifax. At 12 30 there was a gradual dispersal in search of refreshments, and it was lucky that Mr Schofield, the genial landlord of the Junction, had a good stock of provisions in hand. At 1 o'clock Superintendent Morley adjoined the inquest until 2 o'clock, stating that he would drive down to Wool-road and inquire by telephone if anything was known at Halifax as to the missing coroner. At 2 o'clock the jury reassembled, but time continued to fly without the appearance of either coroner or Supt. Morley. The jurors, knowing the powers of, the coroner, were afraid of going far away lest the officer of the crown should appear unexpectedly.

The time was beguiled in a variety of ways - in walks and suchlike - but every few minutes there was a peep into the hall to make sure that the coroner was not being kept waiting. At 20 minutes to 4 Sergt. Taylor arrived breathless with the intimation that the time of the inquest was half past 11 on Thursday morning; there had been some mistake over the telephone. From Supt. Morley a 'Chronicle' representative learned that it is customary for Mr Hill to make appointments for inquests by telephone if he wishes such to be held hurriedly. Such a message was received on Monday afternoon, and was understood to fix Tuesday morning. A jury was in consequence hastily empanelled.

The inquest took place on Thursday before Mr E.W. Norris, the Deputy County Coroner, at the Co-operative Hall, Denshaw.

The District Council, the owners of the lamp, were represented by Councillor W.H. Butterworth, Mr Rowbotham (the Clerk) having been called away to London, and the widow by Mr E. Claydon, Solicitor, Oldham.

The same jury were in attendance as on Tuesday, and at the outset the Deputy Coroner expressed great regret that Tuesday's misunderstanding should have occurred. He understood that it was supposed that the inquest was for Tuesday and that not only the jury but Mr Rowbotham, clerk to the District council, Mr Clayden, Supt. Morley, and others were brought together. He supposed most of them were put to great inconvenience. He did not know how the mistake had arisen, because at the time the telephonic message was received at

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<sup>1</sup> The explosion of the acetylene lamp at Denshaw with tragic results was described in Michael Fox's article 'By reason of darkness of the streets: Street Lights and Lighting in Saddleworth, 1850-1935' *SHSB*, vol. 47, no. 2. The full report in the *Oldham Chronicle* of 30 May 1906, is reproduced here.

## LAMP EXPLOSION

Saddleworth on Monday he had not even received the report of the man's death, and he knew nothing whatsoever about the inquest. He did not get the report of the death until the Tuesday morning, and it was therefore impossible for him to have arranged an inquest on the Monday. He understood that the telephone was out of order on Monday and that might have led to the mistake.

Mr S Virgin, (the foreman) said it was unfortunate that should have occurred because some of the jury had had to lose a day's work. He did not think that right. Now they had another half day to lose.

The Deputy Coroner: I am sorry the mistake has arisen.

Mr Virgin: It is a long way for some of the jurymen to come, and the morning is a very bad time.

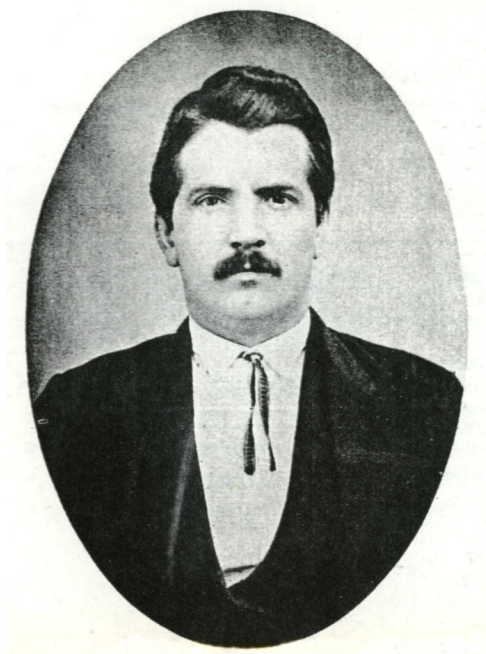
The Deputy Coroner: They are held in the morning for my convenience. I could not get back otherwise.

Sergeant Taylor said he received the telephonic message about three o'clock on Monday afternoon. The words he heard were, "Inquest in the morning. Will come by 9.22 train, getting to Saddleworth at 10.48." They were then cut off, and someone said the contact was broken and a telegram should be sent on.

The Deputy Coroner: I cannot understand that, because I knew nothing about the matter at that time. Was it Monday?

Sergeant Taylor: Yes. I rang again, and someone said a telegram would be sent.

The Deputy Coroner (puzzled): I cannot understand, but I will make inquiries when I get back.



**John Cocking, the victim  
of the accident.**

*Mrs Muriel Henry*

Mrs Cocking, the widow, said the deceased was a labourer at the Denshaw Vale Printworks. She last saw him before the accident just before eight o'clock on Sunday night, the 22nd. He died at quarter to two on Saturday afternoon.

James Ogden of Denshaw, lamplighter to the district council, said that after leaving church on the Sunday night he went and lighted the public lamp. It would be about eight o'clock. He had just left the lamp when the deceased came up and spoke to him. He was about three yards from the lamp and deceased about five.

## LAMP EXPLOSION

There was an explosion and both were knocked down senseless. Witness was very badly shaken and bruised. When he came to himself deceased was lying on the road face downwards with his arms spread out. Witness went to him and got him up. He asked deceased what was to do, and he replied, "Is the lamp fallen?" Witness told him he did not know what had happened. He was conducting deceased home when he saw that his trousers were riven and flesh protruding. The lamp had been there some time. It was acetylene, but was originally made as a Kitson oil-lamp. It was converted about 2½ years ago. There was a square base containing a tin of water. This he had to replenish every night. The carbide was put into another case. After waiting a minute or two he went up the ladder and lighted the lamp, which had only been burning a few minutes when the explosion occurred. The lamp was blown all to bits, so that they could not make any examination. There was no leakage that he knew of. After putting in the water he listened and could hear making of the gas was all right. The conversion of the lamp was made by Mr Moss, of Birmingham, who showed witness how to manage the lamp. He had had no trouble with the lamp during the past winter, but the previous winter he was dissatisfied with one of the tins and got a new one. It was not a leakage; the light did not burn properly.

By Mr Claydon: He was present when the alterations were made, and really assisted Mr Moss. He had never interfered with the lamp except in regard to the tin referred to. He was not a mechanic, but could do a job when shown how. He supposed that a leakage caused the gas to be made too rapidly, and it became mixed with air in the pillar. It would then be ignited by the light. He did not notice any unusual smell, but there had always been a slight smell, which was customary. Other people had spoken of the smell, but he had never attached any importance to the matter. There was once a slight explosion. He had the door open and he applied a match. That was at the time he got the new tin.

Dr. Ramsden said that he had attended the deceased. There was a wound 4½ inches long and 2½ inches deep on the outside of the left thigh. It was a jagged wound and divided some of the muscles of the thigh. There were two lacerated wounds outside the left arm of slight character. The most serious injury was to the nose, which was severely contused and the bones broken. He was very severely bruised about the chest, particularly on the left side of the front. One might say that he was bruised all over. The right fingers were blistered, with burns at their extremities, and there was a fracture of the skull. He and his partner Dr. Stonehouse, attended to the time of death, which was due to fracture of the base of the skull, shown by the flow of clear fluid from the nose, also to some injury to the left lung. The actual cause of death was septic pneumonia, caused by the puss at his nose being drawn into his lungs, causing a kind of blood poisoning.

The coroner in addressing the jury said the chief point was whether anyone was to blame for the accident.

Mr Schofield thought the pipe should have been put outside the lamp so that any escape would have been outside.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

The foreman said that the jury did not attend blame to anyone, but they thought the lamp itself was not altogether up to the mark. They would not like to see another one constructed on the same principle.

Mr Claydon said Mr Rowbotham had written to him to express sincere sympathy with the widow and family.

Councillor Butterworth said the Lighting Committee at their meeting on Monday passed a resolution of sympathy with the widow and family.

Mr Platt, on behalf of the jury, also expressed sympathy, mentioning that the deceased had the respect of everyone in the district, being of a quiet and unassuming character.

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